NAVAL SUPPORT TO GRANT'S CAMPAIGN OF 1864–65: BY DESIGN OR BY COINCIDENCE?

A Monograph
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ABSTRACT

NAVAL SUPPORT TO GRANT'S CAMPAIGN OF 1864-65: BY DESIGN OR BY COINCIDENCE? by Lieutenant Colonel Harry M. Murdock, USMC, 61 pages.

By 1863, the Civil War was basically a stalemate between the two belligerents. Though the Union forces had achieved some success in conducting joint expeditions that resulted in securing the Mississippi River and the majority of the Southern ports, the major land armies of the Union were generally ineffective. In March 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant was named General-in-Chief of the Union army; he designed a campaign for future operations that called for synchronized operations by the Union armies supported by the Union navy. This monograph examines the naval support to Grant's campaign to determine whether or not the provided support was by design or just coincidence.

The monograph initially establishes the theater of war setting that Grant inherited when he assumed the billet of General-in-Chief. This is followed by a summary of the campaign from a naval perspective. The monograph concludes with an analysis of the naval support provided to the campaign using the four components of a successful campaign espoused in Lieutenant Colonel James Dubik's "A Guide to the Study of Operational Art and Campaign Design."

Based on the analysis, it is evident that the naval support was provided by design. Grant demonstrated an extraordinary ability to visualize operations in the entire theater of war. He fully understood and appreciated the usefulness of the sea dimension and exploited its use. The Union navy's command of the seas and resourcefulness allowed Grant to maintain his freedom of action, to operate from secure bases of operation, and to destroy the South's capacity to wage war.

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INTRODUCTION

By 1 February 1861, seven states had voted to secede from the United States. With the surrender of Fort Sumter, South Carolina, on 13 April 1861, and the secession of several other states in that same month, the United States found itself divided and at war.

As the war progressed, neither side seemed to be able to maintain an advantage. By the end of 1863, the two sides were basically locked in a stalemate. During 1863, several Union operations were conducted whose net result was "to detract from the general effectiveness of the Union war effort."[1] A combined army/navy expedition had tried unsuccessfully to capture Charleston, South Carolina, managing only to damage Fort Sumter at a cost to the Union of several ships and many lives. General N. P. Banks was conducting operations in Texas to discourage Napoleon III from pursuing his Mexican operations and in order to open northern Louisiana for sugar and cotton trade. However, after suffering several defeats at the hands of the Confederacy along the Red River, Banks was forced to retreat to avoid total destruction. Meanwhile, an expedition to Florida was soundly defeated at Olustee and Union cavalry operating in Mississippi were routed by Nathanael Bedford Forrest. Even had these operations been successful, neither separately nor in concert would they have been decisive. The end result was the dissipation of Union resources and manpower.[2]

The President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, believed that the best

strategy to employ against the Confederacy was "to move all Federal forces against the enemy line at the same time so as to bring into action the Federal advantage of superior numbers and prevent the Confederates from shifting troops from one point to another."[3] Lincoln's challenge was to find a Union general who shared his strategy and was capable of executing it. He found such a general in Ulysses S Grant

Grant was commissioned as a lieutenant general on 9 March 1864, and thereupon became General-in-Chief of the Union army.[4] He developed a strategy for the spring campaign that would pressure Confederate forces across their entire line. For this strategy to be successful, Grant not only had to coordinate the actions of all the Union armies, he also had to obtain the support of the Union navy.

This monograph will examine the naval support provided at the operational level to Grant's 1864-65 campaign. To be considered operational level support, the naval actions had to demonstrate an operational operating system or illustrate an operational concept. The question that needs to be answered is whether or not the naval support Grant received was by design or by coincidence?

The first step in answering this question is to determine which of the naval actions that occurred prior to March 1864 contributed to the theater of war setting Grant inherited as General-in-Chief. Next, Grant's campaign will be examined to highlight the naval support he did receive. Finally, the campaign will be analyzed using Lieutenent Colonel James Dubik's four components of a

successful campaign model as the criteria.[5]

The components of a successful campaign are intellectual, psychological-physical, cybernetic, and harmonic. A full description of each component can be found in Lieutenant Colonel Dubik's "A Guide to the Study of Operational Art and Campaign Design." For the purpose of this monograph, a brief description of each component will suffice. The intellectual component consists of a sound plan, designed to achieve a realistic military end-state based on clear strategic aims. The plan expresses the commander's vision for operations throughout the theater of war. The psychological-physical component describes the means available to execute the plan. It includes the forces (ships and sailors), the leaders, the logistical system, and the organization of the theater for combat. The cybernetic component describes the command system that runs the entire operation. In this case, the critical aspect of concern rests in the interface between the army and the navy. Finally, the harmonic component evaluates how well all the components fit together to accomplish the campaign's objectives.

I begin my examination of the naval support to Grant's campaign by looking at the theater of war setting he inherited. The conditions that existed at the time he took charge will obviously impact on the type of campaign Grant will be able to execute.

THEATER OF WAR SETTING

When the war began, the Union was not prepared. The army numbered 16,000 men scattered among seventy-nine frontier posts guarding settlers from Indian attacks.[6] The navy was in no better condition. Although there were ninety vessels on the Union navy's register as of 1861, there were only fourteen immediately available for service along the coast; of the remaining ships, twenty-one were unfit to go to sea at all, twenty-seven were in various navy yards in need of repair or were still under construction, and twenty-eight were on station in foreign waters (seven of these were off the coast of China).[7] To complicate matters further, many southern officers were resigning their commissions to go fight with the South -- one-fourth of the regular officers in the United States Navy.[8] The officers remaining knew the task ahead of reuniting the Union was a formidable one with the first step being to develop a strategy for the conduct of the war.

Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, General-in-Chief of the United States Army, presented his strategic plan shortly after the fall of Fort Sumter.[9] His plan revealed a strategy of exhaustion that avoided the actual invasion of the South, but rather depended on the strangulation of the South, cutting the South off from all external trade and resources. His plan consisted of two major operations: (1) a complete naval blockade of all southern ports; and (2) a joint army - navy expedition to seize control of the Mississippi River and its major tributaries with the final objective being the capture of New Orleans. Scott wished to avoid the

actual invasion of the South for he believed that "not only would such a strategy require a three-hundred-thousand-man army, years of bitter conflict, and a huge national debt, but it would devastate the South and embitter its people for generations."[10] His plan would provide an indirect approach, accomplishing the mission of reuniting the Union (the Union's strategic aim), while killing fewer people and leaving the economic resources of the seceding states intact.

Scott's plan, known as the "Anaconda Plan" due to its slow, constricting nature, "was out of step with the political imperatives of 1861."[11] The people, the Congress, and the President wanted to resolve the situation quickly and were not content to accept a prolonged war. However, the plan did highlight for Lincoln the strategic value of the Mississippi River. In the future this would be a critical part of his strategic thinking.[12]

The principal cabinet members that would advise Lincoln on strategic issues were the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy. Lincoln's initial Secretary of War was Simon Cameron. Cameron proved to be inefficient and corrupt, so on 13 January 1862 Lincoln replaced him with Edwin M. Stanton.[13] Stanton, a man of action, organized the department into a more efficient body capable of large - scale war. Congressional legislation in 1813 had established a "loose" bureau system, under the Secretary of War, to facilitate control of the different army agencies. Stanton formed a "War Board" using the heads of the different bureaus as members. This organization gave him a degree of insight and influence over the army that was not enjoyed by previous Secretaries of War.[14] The War Board

"facilitated logistics, and, as a body, recommended strategy. It did not function as a source of commands or operational directives" as those activities remained under the purview of the Secretary.[15]

The system set up by Stanton was awkward for the General-in-Chief. The General-in-Chief was the senior major general in the army. The billet was filled by executive appointment with no basis in law deriving its authority from the seniority of the officer. However, the General-in-Chief was responsible for the formulation of army plans subject to the approval of the President.[16] With the bureau heads working for the Secretary, a "formal separation between control of military operations and control of the necessary quartermaster, ordnance, and other logistical elements needed to support operations" existed.[17] In addition, to obtain naval support for an operation, the General-in-Chief had to work through the Secretary of War to the Secretary of the Navy to arrange the required support.

The Secretary of the Navy had similar control over the Union navy:

> Since 1842 five bureaus, all reporting to the secretary, held administrative responsibility for the navy: Construction, Equipment, and Repair; Medicine and Surgery; Ordinance and Hydrography; Supplies and Accounts; and Yards and Docks. Each bureau, under the direction of a senior officer, became something of an independent satrapy...[18]

Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy was Gideon Welles. Welles, like Stanton, improved the administration of his department. In 1862, he reorganized the bureaus to make them more efficient and decentralized the department's operations.[19] Welles resolved conflicts between bureau chiefs and remained the central figure in

coordinating actions of the department. The same year, Congress approved the billet of Assistant Secretary of the Navy which Welles filled with the aggressive, highly capable, former naval officer Gustavus Vara Fox. Fox became very much involved in operations and strategy and functioned as chief-of-naval operations.[20] Welles and Fox made an extraordinary team and together functioned as the "coordinating authority between the government and the squadron commanders" in "charge of policy as well as operations."[21]

Welles received the formal tasking for the blockade of the South on 19 April 1861. By proclamation, Lincoln announced his intentions to blockade the South's coast from South Carolina to Texas. On 27 April, the blockade was extended to include Virginia and North Carolina.[22] The Union navy was faced with an enormous challenge. The coastline which they were now required to blockade measured 3,459 miles from Alexandria, Virginia, to the Rio Grande River. It contained 189 harbors, openings to rivers, or indentations that required guarding.[23] Fortunately, most of the South was still undeveloped, so despite the extensive coastline the Union navy only had ten major ports that had to be sealed off from traffic, all of which were connected by rail or waterways to the interior.[24]

It has been stated that Lincoln's proclamation to blockade the South violated international law since he did not have the means to enforce his claim. Technically, the President only announced his intentions to prosecute a blockade.[25] The actual "proclamation of the blockade in specific areas was left to the senior naval officer present . . . when he had a sufficient number of warships available to

enforce the blockade."[26]

> The proclamations issued by the naval officers generally followed a carefully established pattern which was fully in accordance with international law. Neutral vessels approaching the blockaded port were informed of the existence of the blockade by boarding officers who endorsed the ships registers to that effect; only if a vessel persisted in her attempts to enter the port thereafter was she to be seized. Neutral ships already in the port were allowed fifteen days after notification in which to sail and to carry with them any cargo which had been purchased by their owners or charters before the blockade had been proclaimed.[27]

A blockade is defined in international law as "the interception by sea of the approaches to the coasts or ports of an enemy with the purpose of cutting off all his overseas communications. Its object is not only to stop the importation of supplies but to prevent export as well."[28] After the Crimean War in 1856, the European powers accepted as international law the Declaration of Paris for its edicts on blockades. The Declaration stated that "[b]lockades, in order to be binding, must be effective; that is to say, maintained by forces strong enough to prevent access."[29] If not effective, then nations could legitimately disregard the blockade and continue their normal trade practices.

The South's major diplomatic objective for 1861 was to convince Britain that the blockade was illegal (e.g. ineffective) thereby opening the way for the British navy to safeguard their mutual trade.[30] If the South could win the support of England and France, the vast economic superiority of the North could be balanced.[31] However, on 13 May 1861, Britain issued a declaration of neutrality.

Other nations soon followed the British lead as the Europeans (especially Britain) at the time did not desire to become involved in a maritime war with the United States. However, the "recognition of Southern belligerency granted to Southern ships the privileges in neutral ports accorded the ships of the Federal government."[32]

The South, in an effort to force Britain and France into action, decided to use cotton as their weapon. Believing that they could place an enormous economic strain on the textile mills of Britain and France if they stopped shipments of cotton, the South imposed a cotton embargo (the embargo was never sanctioned by the Confederate government). In September 1861, the normal shipping season, very few bales were exported.[33] Unfortunately for the South, their 1860 crop had been excellent and as a result most of the textile mills had surplus cotton on hand. The South's bold gambit failed. With their own action of reducing foreign trade, they made the North's job of blockading their ports easier.

Welles initial action to establish the blockade was to delineate command responsibility among his naval squadrons. Accordingly, he designated three squadrons: the Atlantic Blockading Squadron, the Gulf Blockading Squadron, and the Home Squadron. The Home Squadron would be located "in the West Indies for protection of the California treasure ships from Confederate privateers and commerce raiders."[34]

For the squadrons to be effective, Welles had to quickly obtain more ships. This task was made more difficult since the type of ship best for blockade duty is

different from the normal ship of the line for fighting naval battles:

> The powerful frigates and sloops were designed for combat on the high seas or for commerce raiding, not for blockade duty. They drew too much water to operate in shallow sounds and rivers. For war with a European power they would have been excellent . . . for war with the Confederacy they were not quite what the navy needed.[35]

The Secretary acted quickly to solve these problems: first, to get more ships of any type to fill the blockade line; second, to build a new line of ships that would excel at blockade duty; and finally, to develop an ironclad gunboat.

To ensure that the Navy Department got quality ships for reasonable prices, Welles turned to people he knew and trusted. To work the New York harbor, Welles solicited his brother-in-law, George D. Morgan, a well known New York merchant. In Boston, Welles was able to obtain the services of John Murray Forbes, a gentleman from one of Boston's best known families. These men found ample ships available from the American merchant marine fleet which at the time "was second only to Great Britain in tonnage and number of vessels."[36] The merchant marine fleet was vastly underutilized at this time due to the loss of its number one commodity -- cotton. Moreover, the possibility of hostile action forced many of these merchant vessels to remain at dock. Buying, leasing, or chartering these unproductive ships would rapidly build a fleet. Over the next six months, Morgan alone procured the services of eighty-nine ships.[37]

To design the ideal ship for blockade duty, Welles turned to John Lenthall, Chief of the Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repair, and Benjamin Franklin

Isherwood, engineer-in-chief of naval architect. The type of ship these men desired for blockade duty was "a small, fast shallow-draft well-armed steamer."[38] Ultimately, two designs were chosen. The first was a screw steamer that displaced six hundred ninety-one tons and traveled at ten knots. This ship was based on a Russian design and could be built in approximately ninety days. The Union navy commissioned twenty-three of these vessels. The second ship was designed by Isherwood. It was a double-ender, so called due to having rudders at both ends. Powered by a side-wheeler, this ship could travel at eleven knots and was well suited for narrow waterways.[39]

For the development of an ironclad gunboat, Welles turned to Swedish inventor John Ericsson. Ericsson proposed an all iron vessel with a revolutionary design. Drafting ten and a half feet with a flat deck, the vessel had a four-foot-high pilothouse and a nine-foot-high revolving gun turret. The gun turret contained two eleven-inch smooth bore cannons and was covered with eight layers of one-inch plates. Capable of speeds of only six knots and not very seaworthy, this new style of ship was ideal for coastal defense. The Union navy commissioned approximately sixty of these vessels known as "monitors."[40]

In addition to the navy's projects, the Secretary of War (who had jurisdiction over riverine operations) procured naval vessels to prosecute the western operations of seizing the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Working with James B. Eads and Charles Eliet, he equipped the "Western Flotilla," under army control until October 1862, with armor gunboats and rams (seventeen

gunboats, including seven "Pook Turtles," and nine rams). During the course of the war on the western rivers, additional ships were built to meet the unique challenges of riverine warfare to include sixty-seven tinclads and four Tennessee River gunboats designed by the army.[41] These vessels would make significant contributions to the Union's war effort in the west.

The results of Welles' efforts were outstanding. By the end of 1861, "[Welles] repaired and recommissioned from the old navy 76, purchased 136, and constructed 52, for a total of 264 ships, and during this time the number of seamen jumped from 7,600 to 22,000."[42] He had created "the most heterogeneous fleet ever seen on the waters of the globe."[43] Using anything that could carry a weapon, he equipped the squadrons with the means to effect legally the blockade and to conduct riverine warfare.[44]

As Welles was outfitting the Union navy for war, the Confederate Secretary of the Navy, Stephen R. Mallory, was doing the same for the South. The Confederate navy began the war with "six revenue cutters, a steam tender, a few coastal steamers, and two Coast Survey steamers seized by the various states when they seceded."[45] To make matters worse, they "had only two navy yards, almost no privately owned shipyards, one foundry capable of casting big guns (the Tredegar Iron works in Richmond), two rolling mills fit for heavy work (both of them in Tennessee), and a handful of capable officers who had resigned from the U.S. Navy."[46] With no merchant fleet to augment his navy, Mallory knew he was not going to be able to challenge the North for command of the seas. By the end of

1861, the Confederate navy had thirty-five ships with the majority having fewer than five guns per ship.[47] Mallory "decided that by 'fighting with iron against wood' the Confederate Navy could offset 'inequality in numbers.'"[48]

With the occupation of Norfolk after the Union forces departed on 21 April 1861, Mallory set to work at building an ironclad. Immediately, the sunken steamer frigate Merrimack was raised, and work was commenced to refit the ship with iron plates. Covered with two-inch-thick iron plates and armed with "six 9-inch, smooth bore cannons, two 6.4-inch rifled and two 7-inch pivot-rifled guns," the Merrimack became practically impregnable.[49] Unfortunately, the design and heavy armament made the ship extremely slow (four knots), difficult to maneuver, and unseaworthy in the open seas. However, the ship would prove to be very effective in coastal defense and close-in battle. The South would eventually commission twenty-two of these ironclads. The battle in the western rivers would see eight of these ironclads supported by twenty-eight other rams/gunboats.[50]

In addition to ironclads, Mallory pursued the procurement of steamships capable of being commerce raiders. The British built CSS Florida and CSS Alabama were the leaders in this class. These ships were screw-powered sloops-of-war and became expensive nuisances to the Union navy. Though they could not dispute the Union navy's command of the sea, they did stir much public debate and caused the Union to dedicate scarce assets to hunt them down.[51]

Besides commerce raidings, the South advocated privateering in early 1862.

A total of fifty-three vessels were commissioned for this purpose. Fortunately for the Union very few ever captured a "prize."[32]

In another effort to gain an advantage over the Union navy, Mallory "authorized the development of 'torpedoes' (mines) to be planted at the mouths of harbors and rivers." These unique devices were extremely effective in slowing down the operations of the Union navy in areas that were known to be mined. By war's end, the Union navy had forty-three ships sunk or damaged by mines.[33]

Welles, knowing that extensive knowledge about the coastline would be a requirement for a successful blockade, sought advice from Alexander Dallas Bache, the superintendent of the Coast Survey. Bache, a skilled administrator, recommended to Welles to form an advisory committee. Welles concurred and set up a five-man board. The board consisted of "Bache, Captain Samuel F. Dupont (a naval officer), Major J. G. Barnard (of the Topographical Service), Commander Charles H. Davis (another naval officer), and Gustavus Fox."[34]

This board, known as the "Blockade Board," met in July and August 1861. They produced five reports which would chart the navy's strategy for the next several years. The chief recommendations made by the board concerned the reorganization of the blockading squadrons and the selection of potential advanced naval bases along the southern coast that could serve as coaling stations for the steamers on blockade duty. The board continued to meet throughout the war with only minor changes in its membership and function. In later years it became known as the "Board of Strategy."[35]

As suggested by the Blockade Board in September 1861 Welles divided the Atlantic Blockading Squadron into two separate squadrons. In January 1862, he further divided the Gulf Squadron. The resulting four new squadrons, called North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, East Gulf Blockading Squadron, and West Gulf Blockading Squadron respectively, provided an area of operation more appropriate in size for squadron commanders to effectively exercise command and control.[56]

The naval officers that became squadron commanders were unfamiliar with naval operations on the scale now confronting them. However, they developed the techniques necessary to control large fleets, conduct effective blockades, and support ground troops. There were no admirals in the navy prior to the war. By the end of the war, five officers had become admirals.[57] Welles was blessed with a quality supporting cast as revealed in the following:

> The Navy had no political admirals, no amateurs in high command. No volunteer officer rose above the rank of lieutenant commander, or commanded a squadron or a ship of the first rate, or except on the western rivers, an ironclad. From first to last, from Hatteras Inlet to Fort Fisher, the conduct of the naval war was professional . . . no painful . . . search for admirals; the good men were known, were chosen, and in most cases were unswervingly supported.[58]

Operationally, Welles again took action on the Blockade Board's recommendations. Working through the Secretary of War, the Union navy planned and received support from the army to execute a series of joint expeditions along the Southern coast to seize coaling stations and supply bases. These operations

led to the Union's first substantial victories of the war. On 29 August 1861, Hatteras Inlet was closed to Confederate commerce raiders and blockade runners as Forts Hatteras and Clark fell into Union hands. On 7 November 1861, Port Royal Sound was captured. Port Royal was key to the Union navy's effort since it was the only potential coaling station that could admit the larger ships.[59] By early 1862, six of ten major ports of the South had been captured by Union forces.[60]

The success that these joint ventures brought by seizing coaling stations and supply bases for the blockading squadrons also brought problems. For the Union navy to control properly the surrounding waters near these sites required the squadrons to use more ships. The more ships dedicated to protect bases, the less the Union navy had for blockade duty. As a result, some enemy ports, principally Wilmington, North Carolina, were basically left open.[61]

Seeking a solution to the above problem, Welles urged Lincoln to declare the ports "closed" in lieu of maintaining the blockade. He argued that by closing the ports the South would be denied belligerent status and the corresponding protection offered by international law.[62] Welles was unsuccessful in his plea:

> Lincoln saw what Welles did not. First, the Confederate port authorities would ignore the proclamation unless it was enforced by direct naval action, a policy requiring the same number of vessels as the blockade. Second, removing the incentive for patrol duty -- the prize money from captured ships -- would weaken the Navy, since many of the officers and seamen serving with the fleet were in the merchant marines. Finally, such a measure would prove highly unpopular with certain politically and financially powerful Northern merchants covertly engaged in triangular traffic with the Confederacy.[63]

Despite these problems, as the war progressed into the later half of 1862 and 1863, the Union navy continued to be successful. In April 1862, Flag Officer Farragut's fleet captured New Orleans. In May 1862, Norfolk, Virginia, and Pensacola, Florida, were captured by Union forces. The Mississippi River campaign ended with the fall of Vicksburg in July 1863.

So, by the end of 1863, from a naval perspective the theater of war in which Grant was to conduct his campaign favored the Union. The South was divided with the Mississippi River firmly in control of the Union navy:

> After the fall of Vicksburg . . . The Confederates no longer had anything afloat except the hidden away Webb and no further forts or ports except up the Red River and its adjunct streams . . . . at any point within reach of water deep enough for a gunboat, Union troops could be delivered with all needed logistic support.[64]

The South was receiving its vital external supplies through only three ports - Mobile, Alabama; Charleston, South Carolina; and Wilmington, North Carolina. "The blockade reduced the South's seaborne trade to less than a third of normal."[65] The buying power of a Confederate dollar had been decreased by a factor of ten. By early 1864, the Confederate government had to mandate that at least one-half of the available cargo space on blockade runners be allocated to war material as the demand for luxury goods in the South could no longer be met.[66] The Union navy's blockade was tightening; in 1861, the blockade seized one out of ten ships going to Confederate ports. By the end of 1863, the navy was capturing one of every four ships. By end of the war, they were capturing one of every two ships.[67]

The Union's grip on the South was tightening, but the lack of success by the principal land army of the North, the Army of the Potomac, greatly disturbed Lincoln. Lincoln knew that to win the war the Army of the Potomac had to be more successful and the principal armies of the South had to be destroyed.

THE CAMPAIGN

For years the North had suffered from an inability to coordinate the actions of their field armies toward a common objective. Lincoln had espoused a desire for the Union generals to make the enemy armies their objectives and to act simultaneously against those objectives. However, his proposal was constantly met with *"polite scorn"* from his generals since "it violated the Jominan principle of concentration in one theater for one big effort."[68] Unlike the others, Grant "had the vision to see the military problem of the Union as a whole, the imagination to draw his plans on a big scale, the courage to stick to his plans in adversity, and a real understanding of the responsibilities and anxieties of the government."[69] So, in March 1864, Grant took charge of all the Union forces -- the Union war effort was revitalized.

With the appointment of Grant as the General-in-Chief, the previous General-in-Chief, General H. W.Halleck, had to be reassigned. Grant knew that he was not going to remain in Washington, D.C., as the General-in-Chiefs prior to him had done. Therefore, in order to maintain the critical links between the General-

in-Chief and the War Department and the President, the billet of Chie-of-Staff was created and filled by Halleck. In this new billet, Halleck would act as a conduit for Grant to all the key departments and people in the capital while Grant was operating in the field with the army. Halleck also transformed Grant's verbal orders into written instructions and had authority to act on his behalf on matters of a routine nature.[70]

With Grant as the General-in-Chief, the strategic influence of the Secretary of War was also changed. "Grant persuaded Stanton to keep his hands off" strategic issues, so henceforth matters concerning strategy were handled between Lincoln and Grant.[71] Stanton, along with Halleck, would now concentrate on the administrative running of the army and deal with "the rascally politicians and shoddy contractors," while Grant was left free to think strategically about the entire theater of war and to plan future operations.[72]

On 4 April 1864, Grant revealed his plan to General William T. Sherman, who commanded the Military Division of the Mississippi. The plan called for the simultaneous movement of five Union armies. Banks, operating in Texas, was to commence operations against Mobile via a land route. Sherman, operating out of Tennessee, was to make his objective General J. E. Johnston's Confederate army with a secondary objective of Atlanta, Georgia, and its railroad center. General Franz Sigel, operating in the Shenandoah Valley, was to destroy the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. General G. G. Meade, with the Army of the Potomac, would concentrate on General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. Finally,

General B. F. Butler, Army of the James, would attack Richmond from the south side of the James River.[73] Grant saw the destruction of the two main Confederate armies in the field as the military end-state that would lead to accomplishing the President's strategic aim.

The naval support envisioned with this plan was as follows: (1) to transport and provide naval gunfire support to the Army of the James from Fort Monroe, Virginia up the James River for an assault on City Point, Virginia. Upon the seizure of City Point, the navy was to maintain the lines of communications along the James River back to Alexandria, Virginia, the Union's main supply depot; (2) to close Mobile harbor from the sea and assist Bank's assault on Mobile in whatever way possible; (3) to provide secure lines of communication along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers for Sherman's operations against Johnston's army; and (4) to maintain the sea lines of communications for the Army of the Potomac along the James, Pamunkey, York, Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers as it progressed south against Lee's army.[74] Grant initiated his request for naval support to Stanton on 8 April 1864:

> It is the intention to operate up the James River as far as City Point, and all the cooperation the Navy can give us we want. Two of the ironclads are wanted as soon as they can be got. You will know how to communicate our wants to the Secretary of the Navy.[75]

The major joint operation was to be conducted between the Army of the James River and North Atlantic Blockading Squadron. On 25 April 1864, Admiral Samuel P. Lee, Squadron Commander, outlined his estimate for the support required

for the Army of the James in a letter to Welles:

> General Butler's plan requires a powerful cooperating naval force to cover his landing, protect his position, and keep open his communications. His plan is so dependent on naval support, and requires so much of it, that the naval force should be so sufficient as, under circumstances, to insure his safety.[76]

On 4 May 1864, Grant commenced operations with four of his armies. The fifth, under command of Banks, was not organized or prepared for operations due to Bank's continued involvement in the Red River expedition.

The Army of the James, embarked on naval vessels, initially moved up the York River from Fort Monroe as if to threaten Lee's army. Around midnight on 4 May they changed course and headed down the James River toward City Point.[77]

> Never again would the James present such a scene: forty thousand soldiers moving by water in almost every type of craft. First came seven gunboats, then the vessels with Army units - coastal and river steamers, ferryboats, tugs, sloops, schooners, barges, and canalboats - and finally the ironclads, the monitors Tecumseh, Canonicus, Saugus, and Onondaga, and the casemated ram Atlanta, a captured Confederate ship. On board the warships were one hundred seven guns.[78]

Despite the mines that had been placed in the James River by the Confederates (one mine, a two-thousand pound mine, sank the Commodore Jones), the Army of the James was able to seize City Point and Bermuda Hundred on 5 May.[79] The assault, unexpected by the Confederate forces, posed significant threat to Petersburg and Richmond. Unfortunately, Butler did not aggressively exploit his initial success and push forward to Richmond as instructed. The opportunity to force Lee to move into the open offered by this seaborne assault was lost.

Meanwhile, the movement of the Army of the Potomac was directed at Lee's army (see map Appendix A). In Grant's concept, the army's base of operation would continually shift to ensure an uninterrupted flow of supplies and reinforcements and a means to extract the wounded. The Union navy's control of the Chesapeake Bay and the major rivers in northern Virginia made this plan viable.[80] Grant's instructions to Meade reflect his concept of shifting his base of operations along the river lines:

> Should by Lee's right flank be our route, you will want to make arrangements for having supplies of all sorts promptly forwarded to White House on the Pamunkey. Your estimate for this contingency should be made at once. If not wanted there, there is every probability they will be wanted on the James River or elsewhere.[81]

The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron was responsible for the Virginia coastline. Divided into three separate divisions, one division concentrated in controlling the James River and Chesapeake Bay waters, while the other two performed blockade duty off the Carolina coast. By October 1864, these three divisions contained nearly one hundred vessels.[82] The success of the James River Division was evidenced by the South's inability to use these inland waterways for even "marginal logistic support."[83]

As the Union navy patrolled the waterways, the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan on 4 May 1864. The Battle of the Wilderness ensued on 5-6 May with indecisive results. Grant then moved towards Spotsylvania Court House maneuvering around Lee's right flank. Lee countered and met Grant at Spotsylvania

resulting in a costly battle for both sides. Throughout this movement, the Army of the Potomac was supported from their base of operations in Fredericksburg/Belle Plains (small port on Potomac River).[64]

Retaining the initiative, Grant continued to maneuver around Lee's right flank. To shorten his supply line, he directed "Halleck to secure the co-operation of the navy in changing our base of supplies from Fredericksburg to Port Royal, on the Rappahannock."[65] Following a battle at North Anna, Grant continued to try to outflank Lee by moving around Lee's right flank again.

To facilitate the maneuver, Grant shifted his base of operations to White House on the Pamunkey River.[66] Securing this new base of operations, Grant decided to reinforce the Army of the Potomac with General William F. Smith's corps from the Army of the James.[67] This opportunity for operational maneuver was made possible by the control of the inland waterways by the Union navy.

Smith's corps joined the Army of the Potomac on 1 June 1864, in time for the battle of Cold Harbor. The two forces exchanged blows for ten days with heavy losses to both sides. Again, Grant wanted to maneuver around Lee, but this time, due to Lee's proximity to Richmond and the Chickahominy swamps, a much bolder move was required.

Grant decided to move Meade's entire army south across the James River and attack Petersburg (see map at Appendix B). In order to execute this movement, Smith's corps would move to White House on 12 June and move by naval transport back to City Point. Warren's corps would occupy a position south of Cold Harbor on

the road to Richmond to cover the army's movement. The remainder of the army would move south and cross the James River by means of a pontoon bridge.[88]

Working with the Union navy, Captain H. Mendell, an army engineer, began construction on 14 June 1864 of the pontoon bridge. At a site "between Windmill Point and Fort Powhatan," the James River was two thousand one hundred feet wide.[89] Using one hundred and one pontoons and with three schooners (anchored in deepwater) supporting the center sections, the bridge was completed in eight hours.[90] During the construction and subsequent crossing, the Union navy's monitors and gunboats were patrolling upstream providing security for the operation.[91]

The combination of naval movement by Smith's corps and the extraordinary effort to bridge the James River provided Grant with an opportunity to seize Petersburg. Smith's corps arrived at City Point on 14 June, was reinforced by Butler, and commenced the assault on Petersburg. Methodically preparing for his assault, Smith did not assault until late afternoon on 15 June. Seizing the outer works by early evening, he then lost his advantage when he failed to exploit his success. As General W. S. Hancock's corps linked up with Smith's that same evening, the Union forces settled in for a resumption of the attack the next day. General P. G. T. Beauregard, the Confederate commander, was reinforced that night by Lee. Subsequent attacks by the Union forces netted small gains, but due to Lee's rapid reinforcement of Petersburg, the major victory Grant nearly achieved was lost and the siege of Petersburg commenced.[92]

During Grant's movement south, the Army of the Potomac's base of operations shifted several times. The army's freedom to shift their base was made possible by the Union navy's control of the waterways. In support of army operations, the Union navy provided convoy protection, transportation support, and close-in naval gunfire support, and patrolled the rivers to deny the enemy the opportunity to mass for a decisive attack against the base of operations.[93]

Grant's ability to shift his base of operations throughout the Army for the Potomac's advance allowed him to maintain his freedom of action. His maneuvers were aimed at forcing Lee into the open, out of his entrenchments, where the Union forces had a better chance to destroy Lee's army. However, failing to get Lee exposed in the open, Grant was able to maneuver Lee into a siege situation around Petersburg. The seriousness of such a situation was well appreciated by Lee as he had stated earlier to Lieutenant General Jubal Early: "We must destroy this army of Grant's before he gets to the James River. If he gets there it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time."[94]

Meanwhile, in the west Sherman was preparing for his operations against Johnston's army. During his preparation, Sherman was building up supplies in Chattanooga using both railroad and river lines of support. His railroad support followed the Louisville, Nashville, Chattanooga line, while his river supplies flowed down the Tennessee River from Cairo, Illinois (Supply Depot), to Reynoldsburg, Tennessee, where they were transferred to rail for shipment to Nashville, then on to Chattanooga.[95] Prior to his departure, Sherman coordinated

with Fleet Captain Alexander M. Pennock for protection of his lines of communications:

> I wish you would notify Captain Shirk that we will, in May, be actively engaged beyond the Tennessee [River] and I have no doubt the enemy will work up along the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and try and cross the Tennessee to attack my lines of communications. What we want is the earliest possible notice of such movement sent to Nashville and [illegible] headquarters here advised where a gunboat could be found with which to throw men across to the west bank of the Tennessee when necessary.[35]

In addition to using the naval forces for securing the Union armies' lines of communication, Grant sought to exploit their mobility for movement of troops between departments. In establishing the siege line around Petersburg, he recognized the need for additional forces. So, on 23 June, he directed Halleck to dispatch the Nineteenth Corps from the Department of the Gulf to the Army of the Potomac. Having the ability to move without Confederate interference at sea, this operational movement was conducted by naval vessel.[37]

During July, the advantage of operational maneuver upon the sea allowed Grant to respond rapidly to a crisis developing near Washington, D.C. In June, Lee had dispatched Early with a force of approximately 15,000 to drive forward through the Shenandoah Valley and threaten the capital.[38] With the President and Halleck advising Grant of the situation and requesting reinforcements to deal with this threat, Grant responded by sending a division from Major General H. G. Wright's corps and four thousand unhorsed calvarymen from Major General P. H.

Sheridan's force from City Point to the capital on 6 July 1864. Three days later, Grant sent Wright with the remainder of his corps. As the Nineteenth Corps was arriving from the Gulf at Fortress Monroe, Grant redirected them to Washington to reinforce Wright's corps. By 11 July, sufficient forces were in place to deter Early's attack, so he withdrew from Washington under pursuit from Wright's force.[99]

As Lee acted to force Grant to loosen his grip around Petersburg, Grant responded with sea power. Although Lee maintained the central position, the operational mobility offered to Grant by the use of sea and rail transportation gave Grant effectively interior lines.

As Sherman was approaching Atlanta, a diversion from the sea was planned to occupy the Confederate forces stationed in Mobile, Alabama.[100] Admiral David G. Farragut's fleet, accompanied by Major General Gordon Granger and two thousand soldiers, approached Mobile Bay on 4 August 1864.[101] The following morning, the fleet ran past Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines into Mobile Bay where after an intense fight the Confederate fleet was destroyed including the ironclad CSS Tennessee. The fleet then began a methodical reduction of the forts guarding the entrance into the bay. Fort Powell fell on the sixth, followed by Fort Gaines on the seventh Finally, on 22 August 1864, Fort Morgan surrendered which effectively closed the port of Mobile to Confederate blockade runners.[102]

By the time Admiral Farragut closed the port of Mobile, Sherman was at the gates of Atlanta. On 2 September 1864, Atlanta fell. On 12 October 1864, Grant

authorized Sherman to cut loose from his lines of communications to Chattanooga, give up Atlanta, and march to the sea towards Savannah.[103] Confident that he could reach the coast, Sherman's only request was that he be met by a convoy of provision ships once he surfaced on the Atlantic coast.[104] Aware of these needs, Grant initiated the request for provisions on 13 October through Halleck.[105] On 12 December 1864, Sherman's army established contact with ships from the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron near Savannah. In addition to providing the operational support his army required after its long march across Georgia, the fleet provided gunboat support to aid in capturing Fort Beaulieu and Fort Roseden -- part of the outer defenses of Savannah.[106] On 22 December, Savannah fell to Sherman's army as the defenders evacuated the city.[107]

While Sherman and the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron were operating against Savannah, the Mississippi Squadron was cooperating with Major General George H. Thomas' army in the defense of Nashville against the Confederate General John B. Hood (General J. E. Johnston's replacement). The squadron's ironclads and gunboats provided operational protection to the Union force by patrolling the Cumberland River denying Hood the opportunity to drive past Thomas into Kentucky.[108] With the aid of naval gunfire support, Thomas routed Hood during their clash on 15-16 December resulting in Hood's army withdrawing south, no longer an effective fighting force for the Confederacy.[109]

With Sherman in Savannah and Hood's army defeated, Grant could concentrate on the destruction of Lee's army. To destroy Lee's army, Grant had to

stop the flow of supplies into the Richmond/Petersburg area that sustained Lee. With Lee's lines of communications severed, he would be forced out of his entrenchments where Grant's army could destroy him. To facilitate this action, one branch and one sequel to Grant's original campaign plan were designed. First, Grant decided to support the Union navy's plan to capture Wilmington, North Carolina. At this point in the war, Wilmington was the last Confederate port open to blockade runners who were providing critical supplies to the Confederate forces.[110] Initially seen by Grant as an operation to simply close the port as was done in Mobile, the full potential of capturing the port was realized in late December when its impact on the sequel was discovered.[111] The sequel was the approval of Sherman's plan to march north from Savannah into the Carolinas destroying their railroad networks and thus their capacity to wage war.[112] Sherman's plan to march his army north was made after he was informed that it would take at least two months to acquire the shipping to move to the James River area "and to waste two months at this stage of the war was inadmissible."[113] As Sherman moved north, Grant desired to have a base from which he could send supplies and reinforcements to Sherman if they were required, hence the full value of seizing Wilmington.[114]

"Wilmington had been a thorn in the side of the [Union] Navy since early in the war."[115] Located on the Cape Fear River, Wilmington was the hardest southern port to blockade due to its hydrographic conditions and was becoming the primary entry point for foreign trade. In addition, during the summer of 1864 "the

Confederate Navy Department turned Wilmington into a haven for commerce raiders."[116] The Union navy reacted:

> Pressured by panicky New Englanders who lost over thirty vessels to the Wilmington-based raider CSS Tallahassee alone during the first two weeks in August, Secretary Welles appealed to Stanton and Lincoln for troops to assist the Navy in reducing the outer fortifications, thus sealing the harbor. The War Department referred him to General Grant who, though not explicitly refusing cooperation, saw no strategic purpose in it at that time and was very reluctant to detach the ten thousand veteran infantry asked for by the Navy.[117]

Following a visit to Grant at City Point by Admiral David D. Porter and Fox on 13 November 1864, Grant agreed to the combined expedition against Fort Fisher which guarded the entrance to the port of Wilmington.[118]

Porter commanded the fleet for this combined operation. His fleet "was the largest and most powerful assemblage of Union naval might of the entire war. . . . The Union fleet totaled sixty warships, mounting more than six hundred guns, whose weight of fire exceeded twenty-two tons."[119]

Grant had selected General Godfrey Weitzel of the Army of the James to command the army force. However, since Butler "commanded the department within whose geographical limits Fort Fisher was situated. . . . he was . . . entitled to the right of fitting out the expedition against Fort Fisher."[120] Butler elected to command the expedition himself. His total force numbered six thousand five hundred soldiers.[121]

Both Porter and Butler were of the school that naval bombardment alone

could reduce a fort and the job of the follow-on ground forces was simply to occupy the surrendered facility. This belief reflected their previous experiences with combined operations earlier in the war when southern fortifications were relatively unsophisticated. Based on this previous experience, the plan for the capture of Fort Fisher was for the naval fleet to bombard the fort extensively and upon reducing the fort to where it was no longer hazardous, the army could assault the fort and seize control.[122]

The fleet's cannonade began on 24 December. For five hours the ships unleashed a constant barrage at the fort. The army transports arrived late that afternoon and final coordination for the assault the following day was concluded. The landing was scheduled for the morning; however, it had to be delayed due to the nonavailabilty of army landing craft, which still had not arrived. By early afternoon, navy boats were procured to transport the landing party. Throughout the day, the fleet had been again bombarding the fort and by late afternoon was running short of ammunition. Weitzel was ashore with one of his assault divisions and observed that despite the two days of bombardment Fort Fisher was undamaged and that an assault would be suicidal. Butler concurred and the assault force was reembarked on their transports. The attempt to seize Fort Fisher had failed.[123]

Upon hearing of the failure Grant quickly contacted Porter and informed him that the army would provide more troops and a new commander for a second assault on Fort Fisher.[124] By this time in the campaign, Grant fully realized the

importance of Wilmington as a future base of operations for the Union.

General Alfred H. Terry was selected to command the second attack on Fort Fisher.[125] Grant instructed Terry that "the siege of Fort Fisher will not be abandoned until its reduction is accomplished or another plan of campaign is ordered from this headquarters."[126] To ensure that this attempt would be successful, Grant also designated a division from Sheridan's force to embark transports in Baltimore to respond to Terry if he needed reinforcement. On 9 January, Grant ordered Major General John M. Schofield's XXIII Corps transferred from Nashville to Baltimore as additional reinforcements if needed.[127]

The fleet arrived in the vicinity of Fort Fisher on 13 January 1865 (see map Appendix C). Porter immediately commenced a preplanned bombardment on the fort and landed the assault force. Two days later the assault commenced. The joint landing force of sailors, Marines, and soldiers was provided direct support by close-in support ships that shifted their fire in response to the advance of the assaulting force. After an intense six-hour battle Fort Fisher fell into the Union's hands.[128]

As a result of the fall of Fort Fisher, the navy recognized once again that the best way to capture a shore installation was by a well coordinated ground assault supported by naval bombardment. The detailed planning and coordination between the army and navy in preparation for this assault was a "watershed" event in the evolution of amphibious warfare.[129]

To capitalize on the seizure of the fort, Grant ordered Schofield's XXIII

Corps to Fort Fisher on 9 February 1865. Schofield's orders were to capture Wilmington and to open the Cape Fear River to Fayetteville (the Cape Fear River is navigable for the one hundred miles up stream to Fayetteville).[130] Union forces took Wilmington on 21 February. The significance of the loss of Wilmington to the Confederacy cannot be underestimated for as Confederate Navy Commander Raphael Semmes wrote, "[W]e had lost our last blockade-running port. Our ports were now hermetically sealed. The anaconda had, at last, wound his fatal folds around us."[131]

While Porter, Terry, and Schofield were executing the Fort Fisher branch plan, Sherman was planning his sequel. Sherman's operational objective for the march north was to destroy the railroad lines and food supplies in the Carolinas that supported Lee's army in Petersburg.[132] His terrain objectives were Columbia, South Carolina; then, Fayetteville, North Carolina; and finally, Goldsboro, North Carolina.[133] In his planning, Sherman wanted the option to receive supplies and reinforcements along his route by making contact with the Union navy on the coast. In response to his request, Admiral John A. Dahlgren, commander South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, and the Quartermaster Department established supply depots at Hilton Head and Port Royal, South Carolina.[134] Sherman also asked Porter for "two or more points along the coast where I can communicate with you, and where I should have some spare ammunition and provisions in reserve."[135] With the seizure of Wilmington, Porter had fulfilled Sherman's request, since Wilmington was connected to Fayetteville by river and to Goldsboro by rail, and the Union held port of New Bern, North Carolina, was also connected to Goldsboro by rail.[136]

Before Sherman departed from Savannah on 1 February, Union forces all along his path were prepared to support him. Schofield's corps, operating from Wilmington, drove the Confederates from the Fayetteville area on 10 March. "The following day, Sherman's army entered Fayetteville and, on the 12th, the first Federal vessel reached that town from Wilmington."[137] Sherman reached his final objective, Goldsboro, on 23 March 1865 -- Lee was effectively cut off from reinforcements and the rest of the Confederacy.

During the early morning hours on 3 April, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia evacuated Petersburg. Six days later at Appomattox Court House in Virginia, Lee surrendered.

ANALYSIS

Grant successfully brought the war to an end after thirteen months as General-in-Chief. He had orchestrated the movements of the Union armies to maintain constant pressure on the enemy. During this same time period, the Union navy continued the blockade of the South and supported army operations. The question remains -- was the naval support to Grant's campaign provided by design or by coincidence? Using the four components of a successful campaign as criteria for evaluation, the naval support to Grant's campaign will be examined.

Intellectual Component

The intellectual component of a campaign is demonstrated by the presentation of a plan that contains the elements of operational design. These elements include the following: 1) establishment of the military end-state (conditions) that accomplishes the strategic aim; 2) the sequencing of major operations within the theater to accomplish the military end-state; and 3) provides the resources to the various major operations to ensure their successful accomplishment. The plan expresses the vision of the commander as he sees the entire campaign being conducted. The plan must also use the forces assigned in accordance with accepted principles and operational design concepts.

In this case, Grant clearly had designed a plan that encompasses the requirements stated above. His plan directed the actions of five different armies, all focusing on the destruction of the two main confederate armies. The destruction of these armies would satisfy Grant's desired end-state. His plan called for the use of naval forces in four areas:

> 1) to participate in an army-navy expedition up the James River to threaten Richmond (the Army of the James);
> 2) to participate in an army-navy expedition to capture Mobile, Alabama;
> 3) to provide secure lines of communications on the western rivers to enable General Sherman to operate against Atlanta;
> 4) to provide secure lines of communications within the Chesapeake Bay/James River area to support the Army of the Potomac/Army of the James operating against the Army of Northern Virginia.

These missions were understood by the Union navy and within their means to support.[138]

Grant's plan was a product of his experience while serving in the western theater. His operations against Fort Henry and Fort Donelson with Admiral Andrew H. Foote and the Vicksburg campaign with Porter taught him the value of joint operations.[139]

His plan also revealed his appreciation for the value of the Confederate ports and the importance of closing the ports to blockade runners. Grant illustrates this knowledge in a letter to Sherman following Farragut's dramatic action that closed the port of Mobile: "Now that we have all of Mobile Bay that is valuable . . ."[140] Thus, Grant recognized the important contributions the Union navy's blockade was making to his campaign.

Likewise, the Union navy recognized that their support of the army was critical to the overall success of the Union. The corresponding strategy that was executed during the war and during this campaign was land oriented - as if written by Sir Julian Corbett:

> Since men live upon the land and not upon the sea, great issues between nations at war have always been decided -- except in the rarest cases -- either by what your army can do against your enemy's territory and national life or else by the fear of what the fleet makes it possible for your army to do.[141]

The following quote from the United States Navy's Civil War Naval Chronology 1861-1865 characterizes the close support provided to the army during the

occupation of the James River area by the Army of the Potomac (date - 16 August 1864):

> Throughout the long months of virtually stalemated operations in the James River area, naval forces operated intimately with the Army, facilitating the small advances that were made and checking reverses with the big guns that could swiftly be brought to bear on points of decision near the river.[142]

During the execution of the campaign plan, Grant added a branch and a sequel to the original plan. The branch was the capture of Wilmington and the sequel was Sherman's march north through the Carolinas. With exceptional clarity of vision, Grant proceeded to fully integrate these two major operations which successfully closed the last Confederate port while facilitating the protection and logistical support of Sherman's forces.

Grant provided the vision and the inspiration for the campaign of 1864-65. With the full confidence of the President, he was freed to plan a campaign with the full resources of the nation to defeat the South.[143] An intellectual component existed in this campaign that foresaw the use of naval assets.

Psychological-Physical Component

This component addresses the means available to support the campaign plan and its execution. With regard to the Union navy, the concerns are the following:

1) sufficient number of ships and sailors to execute its assigned mission.
2) lines of communications and operations commensurate with the force's size with which to maneuver.
3) competent, knowledgeable leaders capable of performing assigned tasks.
4) logistical system capable of sustaining the force.

Due to the efforts of Welles, the Union navy rapidly grew in size after the start of hostilities. Several different methods were used to expand it including leasing, chartering, buying, and constructing ships. These efforts included procuring ships for the unique demands of riverine warfare. At the same time, Welles increased the number of naval personnel in order to man this new fleet.

Since the Confederacy did not have a maritime heritage, it started the war with an extremely small navy and never disputed the Union navy for command of the seas. Therefore, the Union navy operated at will all along the coast of the United States. The challenge to the Union navy on the western rivers was slightly more significant due to Confederate gunboats and ironclads; however, after the fall of Vicksburg, the rivers also belonged to the Union.

This naval superiority was used effectively by the excellent leadership provided by the professional naval officers that fought for the Union. Blessed with men of action, the five squadrons of the Union navy were proactive in executing the blockade and conducting joint warfare to close the Confederate ports. In addition, these leaders exhibited exceptional cooperation in working with the army in securing bases of operations and conducting security operations that sustained the Army of the Potomac, the Army of the James, and the Military

Division of the Mississippi.

To logistically support the navy, advanced naval support bases and coaling stations were established. The four blockading squadrons used the uncaptured naval facilities in the South augmented by bases seized by joint army-navy action. The Western riverine operations were supported primarily by the supply depot established at Cairo, Illinois.

The efforts of the Department of the Navy, the Blockade Board, and the Squadron Commanders of the deployed fleets enabled the Union navy to meet the requirements requested of it in Grant's campaign plan. The heroic actions of the sailors and crews of the ships greatly contributed to the success of the overall campaign. The Union navy fulfilled its requirements for the psychological-physical component.

Cybernetic Component

The cybernetic component is illustrated by a reliable command system that "consists of a series of processes by which information is gained, processed, and disseminated so as to enhance the force's ability to observe, orient, decide, and act."[146] In this campaign, the command system that had to be reliable to ensure naval support was the linkage between Grant and the squadron commanders. Therefore, the path flowed from Grant, to Stanton, to Welles (or Fox), and finally to the Squadron Commander (or individual division, ship, etc). When the Union navy

was soliciting army support, the path was reversed.

Two examples are provided that highlight the effectiveness of the system and the "driver" of the system. On 4 March 1865, Grant wired Assistant Secretary Fox:

> The James River is very high, and will continue so as long as the weather of the past week lasts. It would be well to have at once all the ironclads that it is intended should come here [City Point]."[145]

The Navy Department responded rapidly:

> Within half an hour of the arrival of Grant's message at the Navy Department, Secretary Welles ordered Glisson [Captain Oliver S. Glisson, senior naval officer at Hampton Roads, Virginia]: 'Send off a steamer to Cape Fear to bring the Montauk, ironclad, to James River immediately, and let the same steamer go with great dispatch to Charleston to bring up two ironclads from there; all for James River.'[146]

The second example of the command system in action is revealed in the Union navy's desire to launch the joint expedition against Wilmington. Due to the increased "raider" activity emanating out of Wilmington during the summer of 1864, that August "Secretary Welles appealed to Stanton and Lincoln for troops to assist the Navy in reducing the outer fortification, thus sealing the harbor [Wilmington]. The War Department referred him to General Grant . . .."[147] The point here is this -- Grant was in command.

In addition to the formal system described above, a more informal system also existed at lower levels that allowed for proper coordination. Once a major operation was approved, subordinate commanders communicated directly with the

appropriate commander in the other service. This is illustrated by Sherman's letter to Fleet Captain Pennock on 25 April 1864, concerning the security of his lines of communications (See page 26).

When Grant became the General-in-Chief, the Union began operating with a modern command system.[148] With Halleck controlling the army bureaus through the War Board, and the Union navy providing its fullest support in response to the Army's needs, Grant was functioning as a unified commander directing all the major operations and logistical support.

Though the command arrangements were far from ideal, the system worked. Coming into the job of General-in-Chief as a known winner, Grant inspired confidence and the system responded -- the cybernetic component was present.

Harmonic Component

The harmonic component evaluates whether or not the other components are compatible with each other. For the plan to be executable, all the components need to work together in a complementary fashion and not as antagonists.

My evaluation of the other three components reveals that the elements necessary for the plan to be successfully executed were present. The best measure to determine their compatibility is by looking at the system under stress.

An example of the system under stress during the campaign was its response to Early's move towards Washington, D.C., in July 1864. During that

crisis, the leaders in the capital made their concerns known to Grant but did not initiate action. Instead, they deferred action to Grant. Grant responded by sending Wright's corps and the Nineteenth Corps to Washington. These forces were able to deter the attack and subsequently pursued the withdrawing Early. This example shows how the components worked in harmony. As envisioned in the plan, the Union navy controlled and operated freely along the sea lines of communications, the Union navy had the means to move the forces at sea rapidly, and the command system responded to the General-in-Chief.

Another example of the harmonic component is illustrated by the operational protection provided by the Mississippi Squadron on the Cumberland River in the fall of 1864. Following Sherman's capture of Atlanta and his subsequent move toward Savannah, General Hood moved north into Tennessee. The President feared that if Hood somehow avoided Thomas' army and moved into Kentucky, widespread panic would ensue and public support to the war effort would erode. Grant's plan envisioned control of the river to protect Sherman's line of communication. Also, the Union navy had the means available to control the river. So when the command system designated the task of performing security operations along the river, the elements were in place to execute the mission.

In summary, Grant's campaign plan of 1864-65 was a classic. The four components of a successful campaign are clearly present. Therefore, in answering the question was the naval support in the plan and execution of the campaign by design or by coincidence - the answer is definitely by design - *Grant's design.*

CONCLUSIONS

The campaign of 1864-65 represents a major change in the art of warfare. In the years prior, commanders moved from battle to battle trying to achieve their strategic aim without the vision of how to use these battles, both simultaneous and successive battles distributed throughout the theater of war, as building blocks to lead to their ultimate victory. Grant grasped the wisdom of simultaneous/successive operations and drew the plan that led to the Union's final victory.

In addition, Grant saw the advantage of operating in close cooperation with the Union navy. He fully appreciated the advantages the sea dimension afforded him. The operational protection provided by the river gunboats, the operational movement and maneuver available through transport ships, and the operational support ensured through secure sea lines of communications were concepts that he used during his campaign. Grant exploited this maritime superiority to maintain his freedom of action and retain the initiative throughout the entire theater of war.

Grant sought to destroy the two main Confederate armies that were remaining in the South. The destruction of the armies occurred by direct combat with the Union forces and indirectly by the destruction of the South's capability to wage war. By these actions, Grant demonstrated his understanding of the Union navy's ability to support these goals. The expansion of the joint operation to

capture the port of Wilmington to cooperate with Sherman's move north is an exceptional display of operational level planning and execution. Linking major operations in this manner is the essence of operational art.

This campaign vividly shows the validity of our current concept for planning campaigns. That concept contains the following steps:

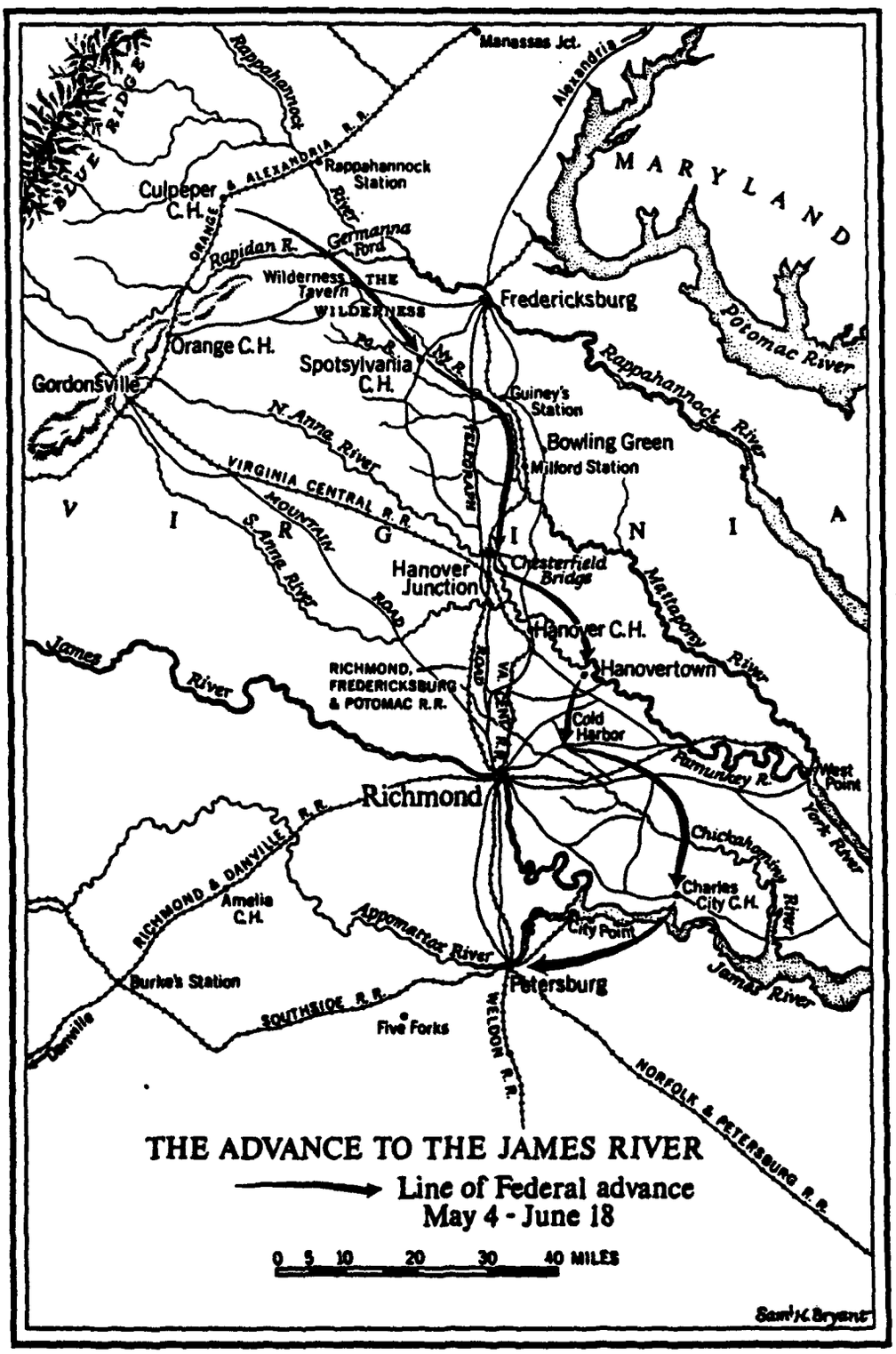
1) Understand strategic aims
2) Evaluate theater assessments
3) Establish theater design
4) Develop organization and command relationship
5) Guide the plan's development
6) Lead the campaign's execution

A quick review of Grant's campaign reveals a remarkable similarity.

In closing, a final point concerning the naval support to Grant's campaign and the war effort in general needs to be made:

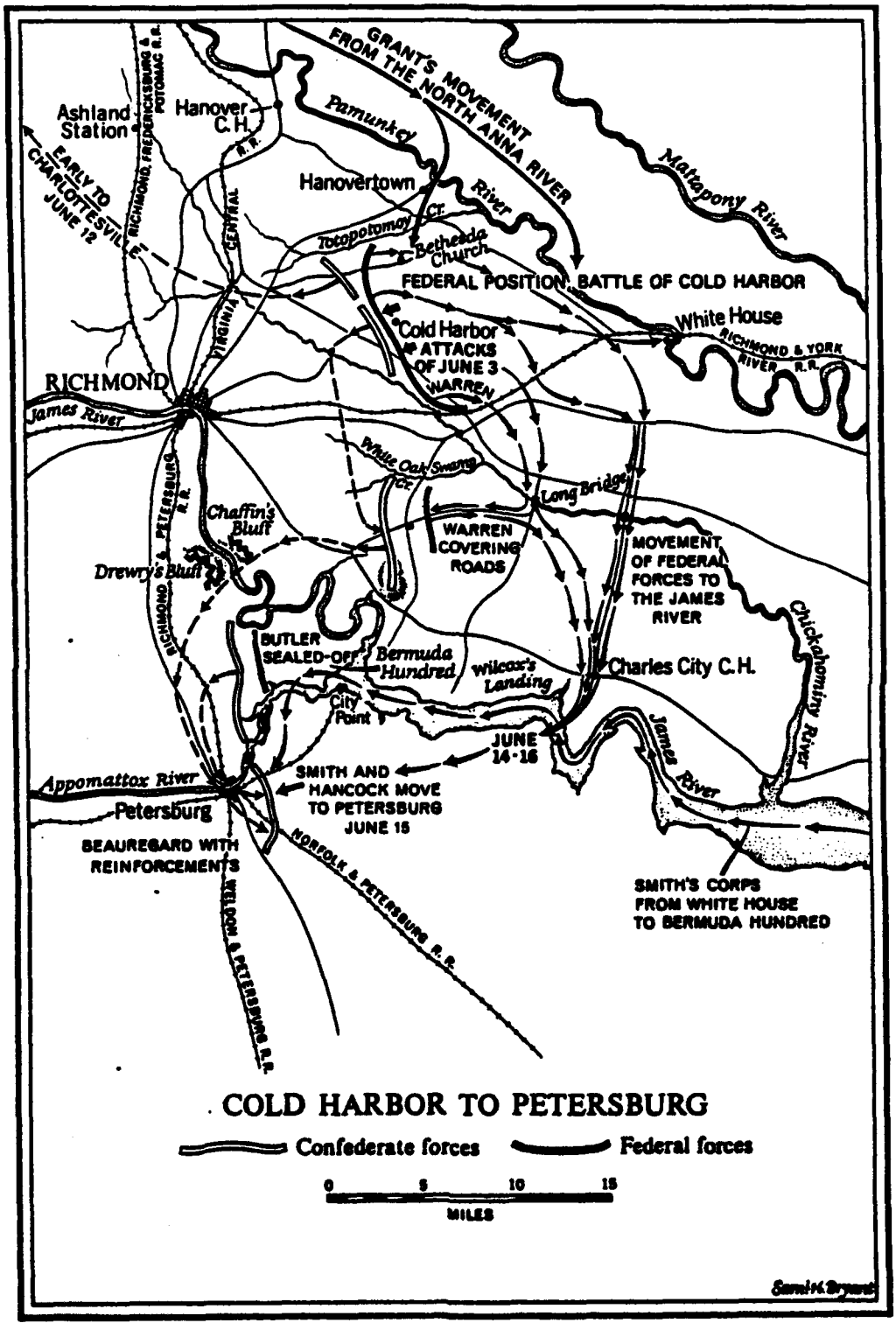
> Who shall estimate the value to the United States of its Navy which there isolated the Confederacy, cut it off from communications with the outside world, and at the same time compelled it to guard every point against a raid like that which had destroyed the Capitol of the United States in 1814. Had the Confederacy instead of the United States been able to exercise dominion over the sea; . . . it is not too much to say that such a reversal of condition would have reversed the outcome of the Civil War.
>
> From a speech by Colonel Hilary A. Herbert, CSA, former Secretary of the Navy, at the Naval War College, 10 August 1886[49]

APPENDIX A



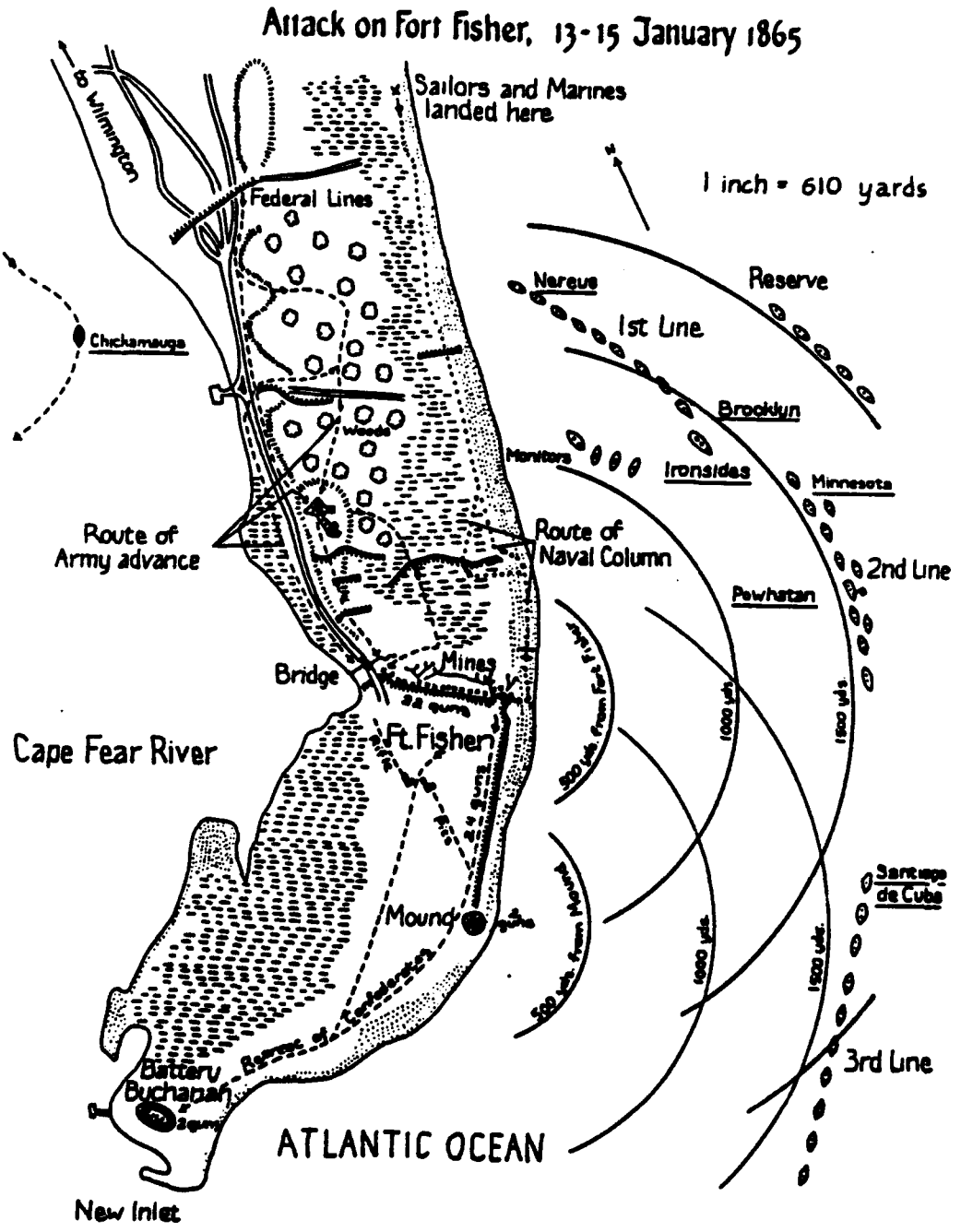
SOURCE: Bruce Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 275.

APPENDIX B



SOURCE: Bruce Catton, Grant Takes Command, p. 299.

APPENDIX C



SOURCE: Rowena Reed, Combined Operations in the Civil War, p. 366.

ENDNOTES

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